

# **MARIN EMERGENCY RADIO AUTHORITY**

c/o Novato Fire Protection District  
95 Rowland Way, Novato, CA 94945  
PHONE: (415) 878-2690 FAX: (415) 878-2660

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**“DRAFT”**

### **Minutes of December 8, 2010, Regular Meeting**

The meeting was called to order at 3:35 p.m. by President Kinsey at the Novato Fire Protection District, Heritage Conference Room, 95 Rowland Way, Novato, CA 94945. Kinsey, with Board concurrence, reordered the agenda, moving Item A Closed Session to the end of the agenda and removing Item B-9 from the Consent Calendar for a presentation from MERA Auditor Maher and remarks from NFPD Finance Director Hom.

#### **Board Members Present:**

City of Belvedere	George Rodericks
City of Larkspur	Robert Sinnott (Alternate)
City of Mill Valley	Angel Bernal
City of Novato	Joe Kreins
Town of Ross	Tom Gaffney
Town of San Anselmo	Ford Greene (Alternate)
City of San Rafael	Chris Gray
County of Marin	Steve Kinsey
City of Sausalito	Carolyn Ford (Council Designee) and John Rohrbacher (Alternate)
Bolinas Fire Protection District	Anita Tyrrell-Brown
Inverness Public Utility District	James Fox and Scott McMorro (Alternate)
Kentfield Fire Protection District	Paul Smith and Ron Naso (Alternate)
Marin County Transit District	David Rzepinski
Marin Municipal Water District	William Hogan (Alternate)
Marinwood Community Services District	Tom Horne (Alternate)
Novato Fire Protection District	Marc Revere
Southern Marin Fire Protection District	Jim Irving (Alternate)
Stinson Beach Fire District	Kenny Stevens (Alternate)
Tiburon Fire Protection District	Richard Pearce
Twin Cities Police Authority	Todd Cusimano

#### **Board Members Absent:**

Town of Corte Madera  
Town of Fairfax  
Town of Tiburon  
Marin Community College District  
Ross Valley Fire Service

Staff Present:

Maureen Cassingham, Executive Officer  
Jim Karpiak, General Counsel  
Farhad Mansourian, County DPW Director  
Denise Wade, Recording Secretary

Guests Present:

John Maher, MERA Auditor  
Dan Hom, NFPD Finance Director

A. Closed Session

Public Employee Performance: Executive Officer Evaluation  
Pursuant to Government Code – Section 54947

- 1) Proposed Amendment No. 5 to Agreement for Professional Services with Regional Government Services Authority and Proposed Executive Officer 2011 Work Plan

Kinsey convened the Closed Session, including the Executive Officer and General Counsel, at 3:57 p.m. The Board came out of Closed Session and the public meeting was reconvened at 4:01 p.m.

*M/S/P Gray/Gaffney to approve Proposed Amendment No. 5 to Agreement for Professional Services with Regional Government Services Authority and Proposed Executive Officer 2011 Work Plan.*

AYES: ALL  
NAYS: NONE  
Motion carried.

B. Consent Calendar

All matters on the Consent Calendar are to be approved with one motion unless a member of the Board or the public requests that separate action be taken on a specific item.

- 1) Minutes from May 19, 2010, Board of Directors Special Meeting
- 2) Minutes from September 22, 2010, Board of Directors Special Meeting
- 3) 2010 Annual Progress Report on Authority Operations and Activities
- 4) Proposed Resolution Authorizing Destruction of Certain Records per MERA's Records Retention Schedule
- 5) Proposed Procedures for MERA Meeting Teleconferencing
- 6) Proposed MERA Meeting Agenda Policy and Procedures
- 7) Proposed MERA Capital Assets Policy and Procedures
- 8) Proposed MERA Risk Management Policy and Procedures

9) Final FY09-10 Audited Financial Statements and Auditors' Report – Maher Accountancy

Maher briefly summarized the FY 09-10 Audited Financial Statements by noting that this is the first full year under NFPD Finance Director Hom, which has produced great strides forward resulting in the fewest adjustments in a long while. Page Two notes MERA's financial position is holding steady even with a substantial amount of depreciation. Bond refunding added complexity to the audit process. MERA is in good condition with internal controls. MERA is not stockpiling funds and is using funds as it goes. There was only one journal entry and he considers this a good report.

Cassingham introduced Hom and thanked him and his staff for all their assistance with the audit, accounting services, and fiscal operations policies and procedures development. She said Hom had really professionalized the Authority's accounting and fiscal functions over the last two years. This working relationship has been very beneficial to MERA and very helpful to her.

*M/S/P Revere/Gray to approve Consent Calendar Items 1-9 as presented.*

AYES: ALL  
NAYS: NONE  
Motion carried.

C. Executive Officer's Report (Cassingham)

1) Nomination of MERA Board Vice President and Recommended Appointment to MERA Finance Committee

Cassingham reported that the Executive Committee, on November 10, 2010, unanimously recommended the nomination of NFPD Chief Revere as MERA Vice President to replace Ken Nordhoff. Nordhoff's resignation as City Manager of San Rafael also created a vacancy on the MERA Finance Committee. The Executive Committee recommended the appointment of County CAO Matthew Hymel to replace him.

*M/S/P Gray/Pearce to elect Revere as Vice President of MERA Board.*

AYES: ALL  
NAYS: NONE  
Motion carried.

*M/S/P Kreins/Gray to appoint Matthew Hymel to the MERA Finance Committee.*

AYES: ALL  
NAYS: NONE  
Motion carried.

2) Proposed Adoption of Marin Emergency Radio Authority Strategic Plan and Approval of Recommended Implementation Actions

Cassingham summarized the strategic planning process, and Committee and Board work that led to the proposed Plan before the Board.

The MERA Board, on September 22, accepted the Recommended Draft Plan as recommended by the Ad Hoc Strategic Planning Committee, Finance Committee and Executive Committee with the understanding that there was no commitment to the financial estimates or projections in it. An Educational Workshop on the Plan was conducted on November 10 for all Board Members, Alternates, Executives Committee Members and other member agency representatives. It was attended by representatives of 21 MERA member agencies and it produced very productive interaction and input. Tom Robinson, CBG Communications, Inc., facilitated the Workshop and the preceding planning process along with producing the draft Plan. She thanked Mansourian and his team for providing technical documentation and support throughout the process.

Prior to the recommendations from the Workshop, the Executive Committee recommended Board adoption of the Plan including the Mission Statement, approval of an initial Board Self-Assessment, appointment of a Governance Work Group, appointment of a Sustainability Committee and approval of the Operations Officer's formation of a Police and Fire Chiefs' Work Group to develop a technology and system-replacement plan. The Committee also supported the Finance Committee's recommended removal of the reference to the Marin Transit District on pages 39 and 40 of the Plan. Lastly, the Committee recommended Plan review every three years.

Cassingham said the Workshop presentation incorporated the pertinent responses from the 25 Board Self-Assessment Surveys completed prior to the Workshop. Extension of the survey deadline to November 12 resulted in receipt of one more survey, bringing the total to 26.

Workshop participants provided the following inputs:

- that the word "public" be inserted before the word "agencies" in the Mission Statement;
- the Operations Advisory Committee of the five largest MERA users formed by the Operations Officer should continue its efforts to work on system replacement and produce a plan for review by all the Police and Fire Chiefs and Public Works Directors within the next 12 months, thereafter to be presented to the Executive Committee and Board;
- the Operations Issues Group of System users, also formed by Mansourian, will continue working on technical issues with the existing system;
- a Sustainability Subcommittee should be created upon Plan adoption as a subset of the Finance Committee to focus on funding resources for system replacement while the Finance Committee continues to work on funding the day-to-day fiscal needs of the current system;

- endorsement of formation of a Governance Work Group, representative of Board membership, to begin work within 90 days of Plan adoption using the results of the Board Self-Assessment Survey as they begin looking at the future governance of MERA;
- support for appointment of an Outreach Subcommittee of the Executive Committee to begin working on getting MERA's message out to the community that would set the stage for support for any fundraising initiatives that might be forthcoming for system replacement costs; and,
- support for contacting MERA Board Members, Alternates and Executive Committee members to determine interest and commitment to serving on these Subcommittees and Work Group before this meeting.

Cassingham reported that Rodericks (Belvedere) and Gaffney (Ross) had volunteered for the Sustainability Subcommittee; Rodericks, McMorrow (Inverness PUD), Plant (Tiburon Fire) and Rock (Executive Committee – Ross Valley Agencies) had volunteered for the Governance Working Group; and Cusimano (Twin Cities) had agreed to serve on the Outreach Committee. She noted there are still vacancies to be filled as quickly as possible and participation is needed to address these significant charges.

Kinsey thanked these volunteers for their commitment. He asked Cusimano to contact others to help with Outreach and more help is needed with Sustainability. He said the Plan has been a year in the making and there are serious challenges ahead, but now we have a game plan for dealing with them. There is now a process for getting information back to the Board on funding, technology, governance and taking a serious look at what the next generation is going to look like. We are digging in early before the time actual replacement needs to occur.

*M/S/P Kreins/Gray to adopt the Marin Emergency Radio Authority Strategic Plan and Approve the Recommended Implementation Actions, including adoption of the revised Mission Statement and Items 2 – 5 of the Executive Officer's staff report.*

AYES: ALL  
NAYS: NONE  
Motion carried.

Kinsey thanked everyone, including Cassingham and Robinson, for a good job. He asked Cassingham for regular updates on Plan implementation activities at least on a quarterly basis or more frequently as needed.

### 3) Other Information Items

Cassingham reported that the Board, on September 22, asked CBG Communications to facilitate the Strategic Plan Educational Workshop and conduct an initial Board Self-Assessment Survey before the Workshop, which resulted in Amendment No.3 to the CBG contract in the amount of \$6,640. On November 10, 2010, the Executive Committee approved Amendment No.3 which is being reported on today.

Cassingham said she is proceeding to obtain an extension of MERA's Right-of-Way Permit with the National Park Service for continued access to the Point Reyes/Mt. Vision tower site. Since the MERA Board approved the original permit ten years ago, and there are no substantive changes, she will handle the permit process administratively and report back.

D. Operations Reports (Mansourian)

1) Report on Additional Frequencies Installation Project

Mansourian updated the Board on the biggest current project to add extra frequencies, including two to the East, one to the West and one to Sonoma. He is pleased to report that the project is 100% complete and operational. DPW is into troubleshooting. The Operations Group and DPW staff report there are no problems being experienced. Where there has been no significant event to test the added frequencies, he will report on their performance at the next meeting.

2) Update on Tomales Site Coverage Project

Mansourian said DPW is working with the community, property owner and design review for improved coverage in West Marin in the Tomales area. A consultant has been hired with Board authorization to determine project feasibility although no funding has been approved for construction. Mansourian is happy to report that after all the work to date, including a photo montage and EMF studies, the Tomales Design Review Board, at the end of November, unanimously endorsed the project and recommended that we proceed. He will work with Cassingham to put this matter on the next Executive Committee agenda to figure out where we go now and how it will be funded. The project is feasible and we have reached an agreement with the property owner; however, no lease has been authorized by the Board. There would be co-location with Verizon which would negate the need for a new site, access road and other support. Negotiations have not begun with Verizon pending Board final approval.

3) Updates on Other Coverage Analyses

Mansourian is still waiting on Southern Marin for the Towns to let us know about the Martha Property site. Chief Pearce will be coordinating another meeting to determine the next steps.

Mansourian reported DPW has been very busy working with the North Bay and also the Bay Area government agencies trying to secure UASI grants and Homeland Security monies. Studies funded from these sources will identify options for MERA. If he is able to meet with the Police and Fire Chiefs, he will have a substantial report for the Executive Committee on these matters.

4) Status/Work Statistics (Chuck)

Mansourian said, on the operations side, everything seems to be working. He asked to be notified if there are any complaints.

5) Other Information Items

None to report.

E. Open Time for Items NOT on Agenda (*limited to two minutes per speaker*)

None to report.

F. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:04 p.m.

**NEXT:                   REGULAR MEETING of MERA Board of Directors**  
**Wednesday – May 18, 2011 – 3:30 p.m.**